



JAMES A. NOYES, Director

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

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IN REPLY PLEASE

REFER TO FILE: WM-4

June 17, 2004

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles CA 90012-2756

Dear Supervisors:

**AUTHORIZATION TO ASSIST IN FUNDING
A PHASE III STUDY TO MONITOR AND EVALUATE
IMPACTS OF URBAN RUNOFF ON GROUNDWATER QUALITY
ALL SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICTS
3 VOTES**

**IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD ACTING AS THE GOVERNING BODY
OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL DISTRICT:**

Authorize the Chief Engineer of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District, or his designee, to enter into an agreement with the Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers Watershed Council to provide \$75,000 to fund part of the cost for Phase III of a stormwater monitoring study to evaluate the impacts of infiltrating urban stormwater runoff on site; Phase III is a multimillion dollar, multiyear study funded with other local partners contributing similar amounts as part of a local match and with existing and anticipated grants from other local, State, and Federal sources.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

This action is being recommended to assist the Watershed Council in continuing to fund a study to evaluate impacts of urban stormwater runoff on groundwater quality and to evaluate the effectiveness of urban Best Management Practices (BMPs). The Water Augmentation Study will evaluate the potential impacts of urban stormwater infiltration on groundwater quality and drinking water supplies in the Los Angeles area. The study

is planned for three phases and is being managed by the Watershed Council. By Board motion on February 20, 2001, your Board approved \$50,000 to fund part of the first phase of the study and on June 18, 2002, approved \$75,000 to fund part of the second phase of this study. In addition to Public Works, Phases I and II of this multiagency study have been funded and sponsored by the Metropolitan Water District, City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, United States Bureau of Reclamation, California Department of Water Resources, Los Angeles City Department of Water and Power, Water Replenishment District of Southern California, Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board, California Department of Water Resources, and the City of Santa Monica. Additional funding partners for Phase III include TreePeople and University of California at Riverside.

Phase I was conducted to learn more about the groundwater quality implications of infiltrating stormwater on site and to demonstrate multiagency cooperation. The successful creation of this coalition has resulted in the Watershed Council and its study partners receiving grants for nearly \$2 million. Phase II, currently underway, expands Phase I by adding new investigation sites and address water quality issues.

Phase III will assess the feasibility of regionwide infiltration in terms of physical constraints, social and institutional issues, and will compare the costs of developing this source of water supply.

Phase III will also incorporate a demonstration project on a neighborhood scale to show how existing infrastructure can be retrofitted to incorporate a variety of sustainable watershed management practices. Phase III is anticipated to cost \$12 million and is expected to take three to five years. As part of Phase III funding, the partners were successful in getting a \$400,000 Federal appropriation. Working with local elected officials, we are expecting additional Federal funding. Leveraging our local funds, we also expect to receive additional State funds. The ultimate goal of this study will be to determine the most effective strategy for developing this potentially significant new source of water for Southern California.

The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Municipal Storm Water Permit mandates the County of Los Angeles to develop various programs for improving stormwater quality runoff. The results of this study will help develop effective onsite retention facilities and BMPs within the County in order to reduce pollution and contaminants in stormwater runoff and also to augment local water supplies.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

This action is consistent with the County's Strategic Plan Goal of Organizational Effectiveness. It involves collaboration across functional and jurisdictional boundaries of agencies within the County of Los Angeles to provide efficiency of services leading to improvements in the quality of life in the County.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

The total cost to the County is \$75,000. Sufficient funds to cover Public Works' payment for this study are available in Fiscal Year 2003-04 Flood Control District Budget.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Public Works is part of the Technical Advisory Committee overseeing the study for the Watershed Council. An agreement between the Watershed Council and Public Works, similar to the original agreement for Phase II, will be prepared by Public Works and approved as to form by County Counsel.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

The approval of the contribution toward the study is an action not subject to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it will not have a direct or indirect physical impact to the environment, as stated in Section 15061(b)(3) of the State CEQA Guidelines.

CONTRACTING PROCESS

The Watershed Council initially solicited Public Works to participate financially in the study. The Watershed Council has administered Phases I and II and will administer Phase III. Public Works will continue to assist in providing technical guidance.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

There is no inverse effect on current services.

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CONCLUSION

Please return three approved copies of this letter to Public Works.

Respectfully submitted,

JAMES A. NOYES
Director of Public Works

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cc: Chief Administrative Office
County Counsel